



THOMAS L. GARTHWAITE, M.D.
Director and Chief Medical Officer

FRED LEAF
Chief Operating Officer

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
313 N. Figueroa, Los Angeles, CA 90012

(213) 240-8101

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TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.
Director and Chief Medical Officer

SUBJECT: **MOLINA MOTION – NURSING RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

This is a follow-up to my June 4, 2002 memorandum and to provide you with a status report concerning the motion by Supervisor Molina approved at your July 3, 2001 Board meeting. The motion, in part, instructed the Department of Health Services (DHS) to establish solutions to the system-wide nursing shortage and to address the staffing and financial needs of the Department's Nurse Recruitment Office.

The Chief Nursing Officers and staff from DHS Human Resources (formerly known as the Corporate Office of Human Resources Management) and others involved in DHS' recruitment and retention efforts, continue to meet monthly to address the aforementioned issues.

Tuition Reimbursement/Relocation Incentive Programs

The Department's Tuition Reimbursement Program revised Policy has been approved and will be implemented prior to Spring semester.

The Department is re-establishing the Registered Nurse Relocation Incentive Program to provide financial assistance to Registered Nurses who accept a full-time permanent position with DHS. Guidelines and procedures governing this Program are being developed.

Recruitment and Examining Office Needs Assessment

DHS Human Resources completed an assessment on the staffing and financial needs of the Nurse Recruitment and the Examining Offices. Budget Adjustment Requests for additional positions were submitted for fiscal year 2002-2003. This proposal included positions for both offices. The Department could not approve this budget

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proposal due to the severe financial crisis it faces. The Department is exploring alternative options.

Tutoring & Mentoring Program – East Los Angeles College School of Nursing

The Department executed a subsequent agreement with East Los Angeles College (ELAC) to continue the Tutoring & Mentoring Program through July 2003 (the original expired July 31, 2001). Funding in the amount of \$245,000 was allocated for this two year program to the ELAC Nursing Department to provide supplemental tutoring and mentoring opportunities designed to improve the students' study skills and enhance their overall learning process. DHS will be presenting ELAC with the final payment of \$123,000 within the next week.

DHS continues to work towards establishing a similar tutoring and mentoring program in the San Fernando Valley area. Meetings were held with various representatives from Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC). Efforts to implement a tutoring and mentoring program at LAVC have been hampered due to the numerous changes in their management staff. The DHS Nurse Recruitment Office met in April 2002 with the prior Director at LAVC School of Nursing. Unfortunately, she was unable to provide a program proposal for contract development prior to her departure. Once DHS was notified that a new Director had been appointed, a meeting was scheduled to provide an outline of the Tutoring and Mentoring program. On October 30, 2002, DHS Nurse Recruitment Office met with LAVC's Dean of Economic Development and the new School of Nursing Director. They were enthusiastic about moving forward and establishing a program at their school. LAVC hopes to get a program proposal to DHS by the end of this month.

Training Programs To Upgrade Skills

Through Workforce Investment Act funding, additional training opportunities are being developed and implemented through the Workforce Development Program (WDP), a joint DHS/Local 660 project. The WDP established a joint Nurse Education Project Team, with participation of nurse managers along with staff RNs and LVNs representing the hospital clusters.

One of the goals of the WDP is to provide training and educational opportunities for DHS employees to fill critical labor shortages. As reported in June, DHS employees responded to a survey about their interest in becoming a RN or LVN. Of the 1,200 respondents, 564 were non-nursing personnel. Since the last report, an individual assessment of respondents resulted in identifying eight individuals who are ready to begin an RN program. This means that they have completed all the academic pre-requisites, with a better than "C" average, and they have a satisfactory attendance record and performance evaluation. Eight additional individuals qualify if they pass a "recency" exam to measure their knowledge of science because these pre-requisites were taken over five years ago.

WDP is working with the Regional Health Occupations Resource Center (RHORC), a consortium of all the community colleges in Los Angeles County, and the Los Angeles County College of Nursing and Allied Health to provide the educational needs of DHS employees who qualify to enter a nursing program. WDP is preparing a contract with Mount San Antonio Community College, which is the legal entity that directs the RHORC, to be presented to your Board in early January. The RHORC contract will allow WDP to establish on site nursing classes at DHS facilities in the geographic areas of the County not served by the County's College of Nursing and Allied Health. The RHORC contract will also provide instructors and class schedules designed to allow DHS employees to complete their studies with the least disruption to their work schedules. The RHORC contract will also allow WDP to offer science prerequisites, such as Microbiology, Anatomy and Physiology to the 88 non-nursing DHS employees who only lack one such course before they qualify for a RN program. By developing this contract for a customized training program, the WDP will tap into all the health care education resources of the

Community College system, and address the special issues regarding scheduling and location to maximize the successful participation of DHS employees.

WDP also received surveys from 277 non-nursing staff that would like to become Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVN). WDP is assessing their performance evaluations and attendance records to select the most qualified individuals to be sponsored in LVN educational programs. WDP previously conducted a scan of LVN training providers in Los Angeles County; DHS will consult with County Counsel to determine the methodology for selecting a provider(s) from this inventory of educational providers.

Implementation of the above initiatives, with the exception of WDP projects and the ELAC Contract, will be dependent upon the Department's ability to secure adequate funds to support the programs.

I will keep you updated on any significant progress concerning the above referenced initiatives. In the meantime, if you have any questions or require additional information, please let me know.

TLG:dp
107-009

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Department of Human Resources